

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 1, 2004

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Rep. Markey (D-MA) and Rep. John Sweeney (R-NY) Spearhead Massachusetts-New York Delegation Request for \$50 Million for Convention Security

Washington, D.C. - Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-MA) and Rep. John Sweeney (R-NY) today sent a bi-partisan, Massachusetts-New York delegation letter to the Appropriations Committee supporting a joint request by the cities of New York and Boston for \$50 million to help defray the unprecedented security costs of the first Presidential Nominating Conventions since the September 11th terrorist attacks. The funding has passed the Senate as part of the FY 05 Appropriations bill for the Department of Defense. On behalf of the two delegations, Reps. Markey and Sweeney forwarded the letter today to the Appropriations Committee seeking to have the House accept the funding in conference on the DoD bill.

Although Congress has already provided \$25 million for the Republican National Convention and \$25 million for the Democratic National Convention, mounting security concerns led Mayors Michael Bloomberg and Thomas Menino to request additional funding to ensure the security of the respective national political conventions. Every member of the Massachusetts Delegation and 26 members of the New York Delegation signed the letter supporting the Mayors' request.

The letter to the appropriators cites several factors that have greatly and rapidly increased the security cost burdens on Boston and New York, including the bombings in Madrid and Moscow and the May 26th warnings from Attorney General John Ashcroft and FBI Director Robert S. Mueller, III that Al Qaeda intends to "hit the United States hard" in the next few months.

Rep. Markey said, "We are very concerned about the security of the Conventions. We know that terrorist organizations are very interested in targeting high profile events that symbolize the freedoms our country enjoys. A successful attack at either Convention would be a devastating blow to the political process and to our country's collective psyche. This additional funding would help ensure that Boston and New York have the tools needed to do the job of protecting the American people during these important public celebrations of our democracy."

Rep. Sweeney said, "The Republican and Democratic National Conventions are an integral part of America's political process. It is in the best interest of our nation to ensure the safety and security of both the participants at the conventions and the residents of New York and Boston. We've provided security funding in the past for the Salt Lake City Olympics and the Super Bowl, now we need to allocate the appropriate resources so security and emergency personnel in New York and Boston are well-equipped to meet the demands of these important events."

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